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THE CHRIST OF HISTORY AND OF FAITH.

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THE life of Christ, to friends and foes alike, is the citadel of Christianity. But such differences appear between Jesus as he lived among men and the Christ of the creeds that many critics are led to assert the unreality of the Christ of faith. The gospels depict Christ's humanity, the church emphasizes his divinity. Are these irreconcilable? Through his humanity Christ is our example, through his divinity our Savior. Are these inconsistent? In a word, can the Christ of history be harmonized with the Christ of faith?

The New Testament answer to this question is so often misunderstood that the present endeavor to do it justice may claim a hearing. "The New Testament answer," we say, because no part of the book should be denied representation. Those who reject certain writings may discount the argument accordingly.

Two preliminary statements may be useful in clearing the ground:

1. Reconciling the Christ of history with the Christ of faith is, speaking in broad and general terms, reconciling the Christ of the gospels with the Christ of the rest of the New Testament. The gospels give us the picture of Jesus as he lived among men. What they, and especially the fourth, contain beside will be considered later. The books from Acts to Revelation show what was of faith concerning Christ in the early church. They ascribe to him divine names, attributes, activities, and honors; divine relations to the Father, to angels, and to men. They contain all that is worth defending in the affirmations of the creeds, and in the claims of the church.

2. Seeing thus the two pictures of the Christ of history and the Christ of faith side by side in the New Testament, we naturally expect to find there the explanation of their dissimilarity

of aspect and identity of subject. This explanation is found in the gospels, when we carefully trace their underlying conception of the consciousness of Jesus.

We must try to approach the life of Christ from the disciples' point of view, in their acquaintance with the carpenter of Nazareth, who, after his baptism and recognition as the Messiah by John the Baptist, claimed the title and mission for himself. We must remember that his conscious life hitherto had contained, so far as we know, no abnormal element, nothing miraculous in knowledge or power. The boy Jesus in the temple was evidently unconscious of the long and anxious search of Joseph and Mary, and the miracle in Cana is expressly designated his first.¹ Further, we affirm that all through his ministry the extraordinary elements of his public life were manifested within certain well-defined and thoroughly human limitations of knowledge, power, and moral status.

Knowledge.—Except in the domain of religion, which includes morality, Jesus manifested the normal human knowledge of his time, which increased with advancing years in the home and in the school, exactly as ours does. It is sometimes said that in him omniscience was limited in one or more instances. This is self-contradictory and wholly misleading. To limit omniscience is to deny it. The gospels show Christ's knowledge to be human and normal, but with extraordinary extension in three directions: insight into character, farsight of present events beyond ordinary human ken, and foresight of the future. All the manifestations of miraculous knowledge on Christ's part can be referred to one of these three classes: insight, farsight, foresight. Thus the reference to the past life of the woman of Sychar was really insight. She could not say, "I have no husband," without her past being vividly reflected in her consciousness.² Christ's seeing Nathanael under the fig tree, knowing of the death of Lazarus, directing the disciples where to cast their nets,³ may be called farsight. His prediction of future events is too familiar to need exemplification, but the

¹ Luke 2 : 49 ; John 2 : 11.

² John 4 : 17 f.

³ John 1 : 48 ; 11 : 14 ; Luke 5 : 4 ; John 21 : 6.

passage sometimes cited as a solitary exception to omniscience, where Jesus affirms his ignorance of the time of his second advent,⁴ rather indicates an important limitation of even his prophetic vision.

It is precisely in these three directions that the endowment of the Old Testament prophet shows itself. Twice in the New Testament, also, insight into character is emphasized as the mark of the prophet.⁵ The woman of Sychar, startled by the unveiling of her sinful life, exclaims: "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." Simon, the Pharisee, when the outcast woman anoints Christ's feet, reasons: "This man, if he were a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is which toucheth him, that she is a sinner." And once, knowledge of facts ordinarily inaccessible, or farsight, is mockingly demanded of one who claims to be a prophet. Such is the meaning of the gibe against the blindfolded Jesus, "Prophecy: who is he that struck thee?"⁶

Jesus was a prophet.⁷ Like the Old Testament prophets he derived his extraordinary knowledge and power from the Spirit of God abiding upon him after his baptism. His superiority to all other prophets resulted from the completeness of this spiritual endowment.⁸ The apostles and early Christians also displayed similar powers from the same source.⁹ Christ's wonderful knowledge being that of a prophet, and manifested in insight, farsight, foresight, characteristic of the prophet, we naturally expect to find that in other directions his knowledge was limited like our own. Of this positive evidence is not wanting. It is true there are two passages in John where a knowledge of "all things" is attributed to Jesus, but the context shows that unlimited insight into the hearts of the apostles is really meant.¹⁰

⁴ Mark 13:32; cf. BISHOP ELLICOTT, *Christus comprobator*, p. 113.

⁵ John 4:19; Luke 7:39.

⁶ Luke 22:64.

⁷ Matt. 13:57; Luke 7:16; 13:33; 24:19; John 4:19; 6:14; 9:17; Acts 2:22; 3:22.

⁸ John 1:32 f.; 3:34; Luke 4:14; Matt. 12:28; Acts 10:38.

⁹ Acts 11:28; 13:9 f.; 20:23; 21:11; Rom. 15:18 f.

¹⁰ John 16:30; 21:17.

The whole thoroughly human life of Jesus indicates by its spontaneity and naturalness that his knowledge was constantly limited like ours. For instance, every manifestation of sudden or violent emotion shows a limitation of knowledge. Again and again Jesus experiences surprise and wonder, doubt and disappointment, anger and indignation.¹¹ The incident of the barren fig tree indicates very clearly that in the ordinary affairs of everyday life Jesus stood on our common level of knowledge. On the way from Bethany to Jerusalem, in early spring, he sees one fig tree conspicuous by a precocious growth of leaves. As the spring figs set when the leaves are coming, there might be half-ripe fruit on that tree, and possibly some of the winter figs might still be hanging unnoticed behind that leafy screen. Wayside fruit was free to all, and Jesus, being hungry, turned aside, hoping to find fruit on that tree. He failed, for the tree was barren, a fact which he, like anyone else, had to discover by investigation.¹² With similar limitation of knowledge he tried in vain to find rest in solitude with his disciples, after the death of John the Baptist, and the precautions which he took at Bethany to avoid being discovered by his enemies were rendered nugatory by the Jews following Mary in her hurried exit from the house.¹³ It is easy to see the value of Christ's prophetic endowments in enabling him to make the best use of every interview and opportunity in his brief ministry, but omniscience would have been an incubus and a clog, destructive of all spontaneity, enthusiasm, and zeal.

This is illustrated in the most striking way by the case of Judas Iscariot. It is commonly assumed from John 9:64, 70, that Jesus knew when he chose Judas what he would ultimately become. But the contrasted tenses in the latter verse rather imply that Judas now frustrates and disappoints the purpose of Christ's original choice. "Did I not choose you the twelve, and one of you is (*i. e.*, now turns out to be) a devil." The

¹¹ Matt. 8:10; 23:37; Mark 1:43; 3:5; 6:6; Luke 18:8; 19:41; John 6:70; 11:33-38.

¹² Mark 11:12 f.

¹³ Mark 6:31; John 11:20, 28-31.

sixty-fourth verse confirms this view by associating the desertion of the disciples and the treachery of Judas in a common "beginning." This suggests that both the desertion and treachery now began simultaneously from a common cause. The conduct of Jesus in seeming to alienate disciples, and to reproach Judas, when neither had shown any outward sign of disloyalty, is explained by the evangelist on the ground that "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who it was that should betray him." What "beginning"? Clearly the inward beginning of the unfaith of the disciples, which soon showed itself in desertion, and the inward beginning of alienation in Judas, which ultimately developed into treachery. For on these, disclosed to him by his insight into character, were based Christ's apparently premature rebukes of the disciples and of Judas, which John explains. Judas probably sympathized with that disappointment of their worldly hopes, which led the mass of the disciples to desert Jesus, but he remained with the apostles, silently acquiescing in Peter's declaration of loyalty. Thus his treachery began. In the light of this interpretation, we can understand how Jesus, without doing violence to his own moral nature, had trained Judas with the rest, had confided to him the responsibilities of financial stewardship, and had sent him forth on a missionary tour.¹⁴ Does not such a case show how the limitation, as well as the miraculous enlargement, of Christ's knowledge, ministered to his perfect usefulness?

Power.—The same general description which defines Christ's supernatural knowledge applies also, as we have hinted, to the miraculous powers he showed. By virtue of the Spirit of God resting upon him, miracles were wrought through him, as through the prophets and apostles.¹⁵ Jesus himself ascribes his signs to the power or Spirit of God, or describes God as doing his own works through the Messiah.¹⁶ Current Jewish theology defined a miracle as a wonder wrought by God through, or on behalf of, some holy man who stood high in God's favor¹⁷—often in answer

¹⁴ John 12:6; Matt. 10:4 f.

¹⁵ See notes 7, 8, 9.

¹⁶ Luke 11:20; Matt. 12:28; John 14:10.

¹⁷ John 9:30-33; cf. WEBER, *Altsynagogale Theologie*, pp. 287-9.

to prayer. Such was evidently the view taken by the spectators and the disciples of the miracles of Jesus, as was manifest in the praise often given to God for his success.¹⁸ Jesus said and did nothing to controvert or modify this view. We might expect that when he came into collision with evil spirits who recognized and feared him, then if ever he would manifest his inherent dignity and personal authority in casting them out. But it is precisely this class of miracles which he expressly attributes to the power ("finger") of God, or, more specifically, to the Spirit of God.¹⁹ In accordance with Jewish theology, Jesus described his miracles as God's attestation of the genuineness of his divine mission, as the credentials of his standing as a prophet, even as evidence in favor of his claim to be the Messiah.²⁰ But he never hinted that the miracles were done by his own power, nor were they ever adduced by him or by his disciples as direct evidence of his deity.

Apparent exceptions disappear when closely examined. Of most of the miracles we have meager accounts, which, however, were not liable to be misunderstood, while the Jewish theological idea of a miracle was so definitely held. That idea emphasized prayer as the human initiative. And though the prayer of Jesus is not referred to in connection with many miracles, yet no Jew would think of doubting, in his case, that dependence on God for the miracle, of which prayer was the natural expression. So we find the man blind from birth assuming that the prayer of Jesus was the means of his cure. And where Christ's prayer is given, as before the resurrection of Lazarus, its terms suggest that he claimed to work miracles only by the Father's power.²¹

The case of the leper, mentioned in Mark's first chapter, seems to present a grave objection to the view we are advocating.²² At first sight his plea, "If thou wilt thou canst make me clean," looks like an appeal to power inherent in Jesus. But

¹⁸ Matt. 9:8; 15:31; Luke 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43.

¹⁹ See note 16.

²⁰ Matt. 11:2-5; John 3:2; 5:20-23, 36; 6:14; 7:31; 10:25, 36-38; 14:10-12; 15:24.

²¹ John 9:31; 11:41 f.; *cf.* note 32.

²² Matt. 8:2 f.; Mark 1:40 f.; Luke 5:12 f.; *cf.* 2 Kings 5:1-15.

consider the historical situation. So far as we know, this was the first time that Jesus cured a leper. His disease was regarded among the Jews as belonging in an especial sense to God to inflict or to heal.²³ This was, we are told, an aggravated case. To attribute to Jesus an inherent power to cure leprosy would have been almost tantamount to investing him with the attributes of Jehovah. We cannot suppose that this leper, who had only heard of Jesus, and that (in his enforced seclusion from society) only in a very fragmentary way, could have meant to deify him. We might, however, expect that he would regard Jesus as a prophet. But in that case, how are we to explain the language he uses? The case of Naaman is an instructive parallel, because it shows such language was used without theological stringency of meaning. The little slave-maid says, "Would God my lord (Naaman) were with the prophet that is in Samaria! then would he recover him of his leprosy." This, taken strictly, would seem to imply that the power to cure leprosy resided in Elisha. But when the request comes to the king of Israel, he exclaims, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?" and regards the message as seeking a pretext for war. Thus the king interprets the request strictly, and states it as an incontrovertible fact that only God can cure a leper. Yet, of course, the king felt himself as unable to be the medium of a cure as to be its divine cause. But Naaman, heathen though he is, and in spite of the fact that the little maid has apparently spoken of Elisha as able to cure lepers, takes no such view of the possibilities of the case. For when he comes to describe the way in which he supposed the prophet would proceed to heal him, he says: "Behold, I thought he would surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of Jehovah his God, and wave his hand over the place and recover the leper." In other words, the cure is to follow as the result of the prophet's intercession with Jehovah. The words, "recover the leper," are the same whether spoken by maid, king, or leper. The prophet is said to cure the leper, but

²³ Exod. 4:6 f.; Lev. 14:34; Num. 12:9-15; Deut. 24:9; 2 Kings 5:3, 7, 11; 2 Chr. 26:16-21.

that means the cure will be mediated by his intercession with Jehovah. The leper in Mark probably used language in a similar way. Under the circumstances his faith in the possibility of cure through Jesus is most remarkable. Naturally such marvelous faith gave itself extraordinary expression: first, in act, by breaking through the sanitary regulations imposed on lepers, for which Jesus rebukes him; second, in word, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Historically it is most improbable that he meant to ascribe to Jesus an inherent power to cure this disease. Rather was he trying to express the strength of his faith in Jesus, that is, his confidence in the efficacy of his intercession with God, even in behalf of one "full of leprosy." The response of Jesus, "I will, be thou made clean," is in the same tone. It might naturally be understood by the leper to mean: "for such faith as thine my intercession is always ready, always successful." For we must not forget how much the power of Jesus to work miracles was connected with faith among the people.²⁴ It is not inappropriate to add, as illustrating Jewish modes of expression, that in Talmudic writings miracles attributed to famous saints are described in language no less strong than that of this leper in implying omnipotence on the part of the miracle worker.²⁵ Yet such expressions are clearly recognized by the Jewish mind as having no real basis beyond the fact that the worker was the channel of the miracle, not its source.

Some scholars attribute to Jesus an inherent healing power, not a divine attribute, conceding that his other miracles were done by God's power. I do not think the gospels put the healings into a different category from Christ's other miracles, nor that their theology would allow that anything short of God's omnipotence could heal the incurably diseased. Yet any such theory would harmonize with my present contention, which is that the divine attributes of knowledge and power were not manifested during Christ's life on earth.

Moral status.—The keynote of Christ's moral life is struck

²⁴ *E. g.*, in Matthew alone (8 : 10 ; 9 : 18, 22, 29 ; 13 : 58 ; 14 : 36 ; 15 : 28 ; 20 : 33).

²⁵ WEBER, *Altsynagogale Theologie*, p. 289.

in Luke's words: "And the child grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." . . . "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."²⁶ The former verse evidently refers to his emergence from infancy, the latter to his growth from boyhood to manhood, for the incidents of his boyhood intervenes. Both passages speak of development, outward and inward. The inward development is mental, but also moral and spiritual, "advancing in wisdom and in favor with God and men." Yet as the New Testament everywhere ascribes sinlessness to Jesus, so here there is a certain absoluteness in the statement that he was "*filled* with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." His mental and spiritual capacities were constantly enlarging, but their growth only measured his perfection, for he was "filled with wisdom and grace." Jesus was always perfect, yet his perfection constantly developed from more to more. This is *normal* human development, normal, because sinless. Such progress implies relative infirmity, relative imperfection, such as made Christ's earthly life liable to temptation, and therefore composed of a series of struggles to maintain moral purity. It is probably in this sense that Jesus disclaims the title *good*: "Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God."²⁷ In the sense in which God alone is good, absolute, perfect, unassailable goodness, Jesus, who has to "suffer being tempted," to be "made perfect through sufferings," to "learn obedience by the things which he suffered,"²⁸ is not good. That is, his goodness is in process of achievement, it is not an accomplished fact; it is human, and does not possess the sublime and immutable perfection of the divine goodness.

Accordingly we find the earthly life of Jesus characterized by absolute dependence upon God. This appears in his attitude and in his activities. His attitude is best described by the word *faith*, which the epistle to the Hebrews²⁹ emphasizes as characteristic of the Messiah. Again and again Jesus implies that his miracles are wrought through faith in God, and he tells the disci-

²⁶ 2 : 40, 52.

²⁸ Heb. 2 : 10, 18 ; 5 : 8.

²⁷ Mark 10 : 18.

²⁹ Heb. 2 : 13 ; 12 : 2.

ples that they fail because they lack faith.³⁰ As the natural expression of this faith, prayer is the constant source of Christ's strength to do or to suffer, prolonged prayer prepares him for the crises of his life and work,³¹ and prayer is often, perhaps always, the first step towards a miracle.³² Christ's activities are summed up under two heads, teaching and "works." He never ceases to affirm his absolute dependence on the Father in both. His teaching, he asserts, is not his own, and it is the Father who is doing his own works through him. Of both Jesus is the channel, not the source. Accordingly his whole life, the very purpose of his coming and mission, is described as doing, not his own will, but his Father's. It is a life of self-denial and cross-bearing, whose line is traced by obedience to the Father, since Christ's very sustenance is to do the Father's will. The motive of this obedience is love to the Father, and its reward is the love of the Father. Christ's object is to please the Father, and his success in this insures continued communion with the Father. He abides in God's love on the condition of steadfast obedience. It is this love which makes possible that continual coöperation with God which fills the life of Jesus; it is because "the Father loveth the Son" that "he showeth him all things that himself doeth." Thus controlled by love and obedience, "the Son can do nothing of himself." God's testimony to him is: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."³³

This thoroughly human and religious aspect of his life is visible also in his relations to other men. He asks the Baptist's coöperation in order "to fulfill all righteousness," and emphasizes his work as the duty of the disciples as well as himself; "*We* must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." He characterizes himself as meek and lowly in heart, and therefore able to help

³⁰ Matt. 14:31; 17:20; 21:21; Mark 9:29; Luke 8:25; 17:6.

³¹ Mark 9:29; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 10:21; 11:1; 22, 32, 41; John 17.

³² Matt. 14:19; 15:36; 21:22; 26:53; Mark 7:34; 9:29; John 9:31; 11:41 f.

³³ John 7:16; 14:10; 5:30; 6:38; Luke 9:23; 14:27; John 4:34; 14:31; 15:10; 8:29; 5:19 f., 30; 8:28, 42; Matt. 17:5.

the laboring and heavy-laden. Often he manifests keenest sympathy with human suffering.³⁴

Finally we have a clear demonstration of the purely human character of the moral and religious life of Jesus in the way in which he uses it as an example for his disciples: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Here he opens wide the door of his religious life and bids them enter in. If there is not open to the disciple a life really like the Master's in motive, action, and result, these words are mockery. Two truths are here involved: First, that we can enter into the sphere of Christ's earthly life and live in it; second, that as the earthly Christ in his humiliation lived in constant dependence on the heavenly Father, so we on earth are to live in constant dependence on the heavenly, the glorified Christ. The most pervasive thought of Christ's last counsels to his disciples is this, that the inspiration of the life of the disciple is to be found in the glorified Christ, even as the earthly Christ found his in his heavenly Father. Christ's love to the disciples is to be the light of their lives, as God's love was of his. Christ's love is also to be their example; his joy, his peace, his sense of God's encircling love are to be transferred to them, because their separation from the world and their mission in the world are like Christ's and demand a similar consecration.³⁵ Thus disciples enter into the secret of the earthly life of Jesus and possess it.

The moral status of Christ on earth has shown itself to us as thoroughly human; first, directly, in a brief analysis of its character; second, indirectly, as reflected in the exemplary value for his disciples, which Jesus ascribed to his earthly life. His apostles, in their turn, and Paul with them, have set this example before all the followers of Jesus. But, as already implied, this exemplary character of Christ's earthly life is possible only if he lived under the limitations of knowledge, power, and moral

³⁴ Matt. 3:15; John 9:4; Matt. 11:29; 9:36; 14:14; 20:34; Mark 1:41; John 11:35.

³⁵ John 15:9-12; 13:27; 17:13-26.

status, which we have tried to define. For if Jesus walked this earth in the halo of divine glory, clad in the might and majesty of the divine attributes, perfect in knowledge, in power, in changeless holiness, then he is no example for us, save as God himself presents a moral ideal. For then Christ bore little more than the semblance of human infirmity, and experienced only the shadow of temptation. This last point is well put by a recent writer in a dialogue between two of his characters :

"He triumphed over sin," said my visitor, "as if a text or a phrase were an argument." "A cheap triumph," I said. "You remember that Roman emperor who used to descend into the arena, fully armed, and pit himself against some poor wretch who had only a leaden foil which would double up at a thrust. According to your theory of your Master's life, you would have it that he faced temptations of this world at such an advantage that they were only harmless leaden things, and not the sharp assailants which we find them."³⁶

A consciously omniscient, omnipotent, immutably holy being, walking this earth, could hardly even act the part of the weak and weary, the sorrowing and suffering, the tempted and tried. To such a one nothing could be contingent, nothing doubtful, nothing dangerous. How could one consciously possessing all power be tempted to seek right ends by wrong means? What effort would be necessary in one consciously omniscient to recognize Satan's voice and meaning in the most subtle suggestion of evil? What suffering could there be for divine immutable holiness when brought face to face with sin in any form, except the shock of the repulsive contact?

What progress in moral achievement is possible in the life of one whose stainless perfection and perfect holiness are consciously and unchangeably assured by his essential nature and attributes? Yet moral progress is the necessary foundation for example. Christ is our example, because, in all essentials for moral and religious living, he was a man like ourselves. Phillips Brooks entered a protest against that seventeenth century theology "whose Christ was a mysterious and unaccountable being, a true spiritual Melchizedek, without vivid and real human associations, without age, without realized locality, a dogma, a

³⁶ A. CONAN DOYLE, *Stark Munro Letters*, pp. 285 f.

creed, a fulfillment of prophecy, an adjustment of relations, not a man."³⁷

Such a Christ is like the saint in a painted window, glorious, indeed, with a light that is not of this world shining through it, but flat and cold and lifeless as an inspiration and an example to men.

The glorified Christ of faith does not fit into the circumstances of his earthly humiliation. The picture greatly transcends the frame.

But immediately the question presses: Have we not ransomed Christ's humanity at the price of his deity, his example at the expense of his saving power? On the contrary, his full and proper deity is possible only if it was hidden, not manifested, during his earthly life. The phrase, "God manifest in the flesh," is not found in the Revised Bible, and ought to be dropped by theologians, for it is a contradiction in terms. It is when we try to find in the miraculous powers of Jesus the attributes of his deity that we imperil that deity. Undoubtedly, in knowledge, power, goodness, he surpassed all others. Yet these endowments fell far short of the omniscience, omnipotence, perfection of absolute deity. And when we try to make of these earthly endowments the divine attributes of the glorified Christ, their limitations become the limitations of his deity—again a contradiction in terms. Thus Christ would become a being intermediate between God and man far below the standard of the divine. This is false, not only to theology, but also to history. Not only are Christ's earthly endowments inadequate as direct evidence of his deity, but they were never treated as such by him or by his disciples.

They were manifested, according to the New Testament, only after the baptism, as the result of that anointing for service, bestowed in the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus. And his moral status, while it included two correlate factors not found in other men, sinlessness and unbroken communion with God, was, nevertheless, entirely and consciously human. His sinless perfection was the result of conflict against temptation, waged with

³⁷ *Influence of Jesus*, p. 79.

no weapons which we cannot wield, and his relation to God was religion, humble, devoted, prayerful.

But far more conspicuous than the human limitation encircling Jesus in his humiliation on earth is the divine glory which surrounds the Christ in his exaltation at God's right hand. The unconscious restraint in the gospels is much less evident than the untrammelled freedom of the other books. Their authors almost seem to vie one with another in the splendor of the predicates lavished on the Great Head of the church. "The Lord" supreme is his most constant title,³⁸ and with it is associated the frequent and unreserved application to Christ of Jehovah passages from the Old Testament.³⁹ Omniscience,⁴⁰ omnipotence,⁴¹ omnipresence,⁴² immutability,⁴³ eternity⁴⁴ are recognized as his attributes. Divine honors of prayer and praise, of worship and adoration, are paid to him by these Jews, to whom worship of man or angel would be blasphemy.⁴⁵ It is a striking fact that probably the earliest name for Christians was "worshippers of Jesus." By this they were distinguished from the Jews, who shared with them the worship of Jehovah.⁴⁶ In all religious relations to the church and the individual Christian, Christ is supreme. The only limit observed is a subordination to the Father, not of essence or attribute, but of office and work.⁴⁷

But here a final question confronts us. We have tried to show the consistency, the underlying unity, between the Christ of history and the Christ of faith. Yet we must still inquire how the first disciples made the transition from one to the other. The

³⁸E. g., 1 Cor. 8 : 9; Phil. 2 : 11; 2 Cor. 4 : 5; 1 Cor. 12 : 3; Jude 4.

³⁹E. g., Rom. 10 : 13; 1 Cor. 2 : 16; 10 : 9; Heb. 1 : 10 f.; 1 Pet. 3 : 14 f.; Rev. 2 : 23.

⁴⁰Rev. 1 : 14; 2 : 23; 1 Cor. 4 : 5.

⁴¹Eph. 1 : 20 f.; Phil. 2 : 10; Col. 1 : 18; Heb. 1 : 3; Rev. 19 : 16.

⁴²Rev. 5 : 6; Eph. 1 : 23; Matt. 28 : 20.

⁴³Heb. 1 : 12; 13 : 8.

⁴⁴1 John 1 : 1 f.; John 1 : 1 f.; Rev. 22 : 13; Heb. 7 : 3.

⁴⁵2 Cor. 12 : 8; Acts 7 : 59 f.; 1 Thes. 3 : 11 f.; Rev. 5 : 8-14; Phil. 2 : 10; 2 Tim. 4 : 18; Acts 10 : 25 f.; 14 : 14 f.; Rev. 19 : 10; 22 : 8.

⁴⁶Acts 9 : 14, 21; 1 Cor. 1 : 2; cf. ZAHN, "Adoration of Jesus," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April and July, 1894.

⁴⁷E. g., 1 Cor. 15 : 24-28.

biblical answer is simple and unmistakable: It was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The first preaching of the Christ as risen, glorified, seated at God's right hand, the Lord supreme, is the initial manifestation of the Spirit's power. As the advent of the Spirit is the fulfillment of Christ's promise, so his work is the glorification of Jesus as Lord.⁴⁸ But this work would have been incomprehensible, well-nigh impossible, unless it was founded on the teachings of Jesus. On this foundation we can trace the development by the Spirit of two lines of connection between the Christ of history and the Christ of faith; the identity of his office as mediator, and the identity of his person as divine.

First, the identity of office. As formerly on earth, so now in heaven, with widest difference of attribute and circumstance, Christ is still the mediator of the moral law and the forgiveness of sins, of salvation and resurrection, of judgment and life eternal. This identity of office manifests identity of person, because the mediatorship attaches primarily neither to the attributes nor to the circumstances of the Christ, but to his person, whether in humiliation or exaltation; though, of course, the attributes and circumstances of each sphere are necessary to the development of his mediatorial ability. Thus only as mortal can he become the propitiatory sacrifice, only as divine can he officiate as the eternal High Priest; yet on the earthly offering is based the heavenly intercession.

Second, the identity of Christ's person as divine. Here the process of development is the same. The synoptic gospels give us premises which the Spirit would use. The claims of Jesus override all earth's dearest affections, even that for life itself. He emphasizes the unique character of the reciprocal relation which includes God and himself and excludes all others. He promises to exercise omnipotence and omnipresence in behalf of his disciples in their world-wide work.⁴⁹ Especially in the whole picture of the second advent and the final judgment, which the prophets had brought into the foreground of the

⁴⁸ Acts 1:4 f.; cf. John 16:7; 1 Cor. 12:3; cf. John 16:14; 14:26.

⁴⁹ Luke 14:26; Matt. 11:27; 28:18, 20.

national hope, Jesus replaces the central figure of Jehovah with himself. This is manifestly the lead which the New Testament writers followed, in the freedom with which (as we have seen) they applied Old Testament Jehovah passages to the Christ.

Yet the tradition underlying the synoptic gospels is inadequate to account for the fullness with which the teaching of Christ's divinity was developed in the apostolic church. The words of Weizsäcker (in 1864) are still worth citing: "The strong apostolic faith which has assured to Christianity its permanent existence in the world can be explained only on the assumption that the life of Jesus stood on such a lofty plane as the fourth gospel permits us to discern. We have every reason to suppose that this derivation of the belief in the higher nature of Jesus from his own words and deeds sprang from a historical conviction of the writer himself. For this delineation of Jesus exactly corresponds to the mighty effect produced by the whole personality, and is necessary in order to explain how the faith in this person so soon came to be the essence of Christianity."⁵⁰ In a word, a self-attestation of Jesus, such as the fourth gospel gives, is necessary to account for the faith of the apostolic church.

This is clearly seen in the apostolic teaching concerning the preëxistence of the Son of God. We hear of the preëxistence doctrine of Paul, of Hebrews, of the fourth gospel, and of the apocalypse. Strictly speaking, such doctrines do not exist. We have a Pauline doctrine of justification by faith, and of Christian freedom from the law, for we find Paul arguing on these subjects and seeking to establish his views. But in the New Testament there is no argument for the fact of the preëxistence of the Son of God, nor for its eternity, nor for its divine nature. A belief in the eternal, divine preëxistence of the Son of God underlies, not only the differing expressions of the various writers, but also the faith which they presuppose in their readers. This is assumed, nowhere argued or established. It is assumed as the faith of Christians in Rome, in Corinth, in Galatia, in Philippi, in Colossæ, among the Jews addressed in Hebrews,

⁵⁰ *Untersuchungen*, pp. 287 f.

and the Gentiles for whom the Johannean writings were destined. There is no trace of its being even an inference independently drawn by each writer from common premises; rather is it one of the fundamentals of the common Christianity.

I do not see how it is possible to explain the universal assumption⁵¹ of the eternal, divine preëxistence of the Son of God, in the apostolic church, unless Jesus himself claimed it. And this is an illustration of a wider truth. It is, unless I greatly err, impossible to account for the Christology of the apostolic church, unless Jesus was such a person and made such claims as the fourth gospel represents.

We have endeavored to mediate between the Christ of history and the Christ of faith by indicating the consistency and connection between them in the New Testament teachings. May not those who today feel acutely the differences between Jesus as "manifested in the flesh" and as "preached among the nations" profit by the experience of the apostolic church?

⁵¹ 1 Pet. 1 : 11 does not preclude, though it does not imply, belief in the *personal* preëxistence of the Son of God.